

W. Garrison to John Farmer, of Concord, N.H.  
Copy. (Original in possession of Charles B. Brooks,  
now (1892) at 48 Congress St., Boston, who  
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Boston, June 6, 1837.

Dear Sir:

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If I could believe that my presence at the annual meeting of your State Anti-Slavery Society would be of essential importance, I would hasten to Concord,—busily occupied as I am, at the present time, with pressing duties in the city: but, as you are to have with you our distinguished coadjutor James G. Birney, and our invaluable friend William Goodell, as well as other able advocates of our much persecuted, yet very thriving cause, this brief and hasty letter must answer as a substitute for my personal attendance.

Let me admonish you all, not to waste your time in discussing points which are not of immediate and vital importance. I would humbly suggest, that, to dwell upon the "self-evident truth," that all men are created free and equal—to attempt to prove, by an elaborate train of metaphysical reasoning, that to transform a human being into a beast or an article of merchandize, is a sinful act—to linger about the simple and obvious proposition, that to withhold the Bible, and all moral and intellectual culture, from "our fellow-countrymen in chains," who are "slaves in a land of light and law," is a dreadful outrage upon the mind and soul—or even to spend time in discussing the safety and practicability of immediate emancipation, or the absurdity and cruelty of the colonization scheme—would be, at the present crisis, in your meeting, not clearly to discern the "signs of the times," but



to overlook matters of far more immediate importance. I do not know but I shall excite much surprise among you in declaring, that never have I regarded the anti-slavery cause to be in such peril--never have I had so little hope of the peaceful overthrow of slavery in our midst--never have I regarded the existence of this nation in so much jeopardy, as at the present time. There is every probability that we are speedily to be involved in a war with Mexico, ostensibly to redress injuries, but really to extend slavery and the slave trade. As a nation, we have evinced the basest perfidy toward Mexico; we have openly violated the faith of treaties; we have encouraged our citizens to invade and revolutionize a part of her territory; we have rashly and impudently recognized the independence of that territory; and we have been fertile in devising plots and expedients to provoke her to declare war against us. I need not portray to you what will be the horrors of such a war; nor in what manner, or to what extent, it will cripple all the benevolent and religious enterprises of the day--for when a nation is at war, the brotherhood of mankind is forgotten or denied, good will toward man is turned into malevolence, and false honor and the demon of revenge make havoc of all that is lovely and of good report.

But the crowning calamity which threatens us, is the annexation of Texas to our Union, at the session of Congress in September next. Should this awful event happen, I do not see any hope for the slaves at the south--for the freemen of the North--or for our guilty, though still beloved country. I fear the time



for repentance and reformation will have passed forever. And yet there cannot be the slightest doubt, that the plot is already perfected—and that the extra session alluded to, is to carry it into execution. You will perceive, by the resolutions passed at the annual meeting of the Parent Society at New York, and by the New England Convention in this city, the deep and solemn interest which was felt in this tremendous question by the delegates assembled on those occasions. I hope those resolutions, in reference to Texas, will be read at your meeting—that they will occupy your thoughts, and incite you to action—that you will adopt similar ones, and lay your plans to rouse up the people of New Hampshire, without distinction of sect or party, to protest against the admission of Texas into the Union. In comparison with this topic, all others are of trifling importance at this crisis. Bend all your energies and means to prevent so direful a catastrophe.

My heart is overflowing on this subject—but I must stop, for I have neither time nor room to give it utterance.

With high esteem and fraternal regard, I remain

Your friend and coadjutor,

Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

John Farmer.

*John Farmer, Esq.  
Concord, N.H.*

